Mardi Gras at Mom's house

by

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INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - DAWN

We see Sarah 19, goth girl, looking at her phone and pacing nervously around the apartment.

It's a studio apartment with a couch and a TV on bricks in the center of the room. The walls are covered with posters from bands like The Cure and NIN.

TITLE- MARDI GRAS MORNING 1998

The phone rings.

SARAH
(into phone) Hey Lilly... Yeah I am up. I am ready... Okay...

EXT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - DAWN

Sarah has her back to us as she locks her apartment door. She turns, a cigarette between her black lips. She blows smoke at us.

A yellow car rolls up. A tall thin blond woman around 20s pokes her head out of the drivers side window.

LILLY
Jeff! Ready to go?

Sarah rolls her eyes and puts out her cigarette. She steps into the car.

LILLY
Those things make you stink

SARAH
They keep me from killing everyone.

LILLY
Don't make jokes like that.

SARAH
Whatever. Can you please not call me Jeff? That's my dead name. I've been on hormone replacement therapy for two years and tomorrow I leave for Colorado to have the surgery.

LILLY
I know.. but to me you will always be my dorky little brother.

SARAH
It hurts when you say things like that.

LILLY
It's un Godly.

SARAH
It's who I am.

LILLY
You'll never have children.

SARAH
Maybe I don't want children.

LILLY
Look every time we get together we have this same fight. Can we just get through this day as a family?

SARAH
Fine.

EXT. MOM'S HOUSE- DAY

It's a big white house on the edge of the street. Both sides of the road are packed with people cheering and drinking.

Sarah stands by her cousin ANDREA (late teens shaved head punk girl) The two are both sharing a bottle of jager covertly as they are both under 21 and cops roll down the street signaling the start of the parade.

MOLLY (Sarah's Mom, late 30s) walks up.

MOLLY
What are you girls up to?

Sarah takes a last swallow from the bottle and looks at Molly.

SARAH
Just...

Molly grabs the bottle and pours the remainder on the sidewalk.

MOLLY
You're dad drank himself stupid. So did my Dad.

SARAH
Sorry Mom...we were just...

MOLLY
Just being stupid teens. Go inside and sober up.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE- DAY

It's decorated with crosses and photos of Molly's kids and paintings of John Wayne.

Sarah walks around the living room a cup of black coffee in her hand. She sips on it as she looks at a photo of a 9 year old Jeff, dressed in camouflage holding a BB gun.

FLASH BACK

GEORGIA 1987

We see 9 year old Jeff running around the backyard. He sees a bird in a tree and aims the BB gun at it.

BACK TO PRESENT

MOLLY'S LIVING ROOM- DAY

MOLLY
Jeff?

SARAH
Sarah... my name is Sarah.

MOLLY
You will always be my Son.

SARAH
I can't be your little boy Mom.

She turns around looking at a huge cross hanging on the wall. She takes a long sip from her cup of coffee.

MOLLY
When did you start smoking?

SARAH
When I was 12, just kept it a secret until I was able to buy my own. I don't want to hear any hypocritical bull shit cause you did the same thing.

MOLLY
I was hoping you would learn from my mistakes.

SARAH
Sorry to disappoint you Mommy dearest.

She walks away. Molly chokes back some tears and looks up at the cross.

MOLLY
God help him.

EXT. MOM'S HOUSE- DAY

Andrea and Sarah stand by the road with a crowd of people all cheering as floats come by.

People on the floats are throwing beads and plastic cups at the crowd.

Sarah catches a pair of purple beads. She puts them on her neck and looks at Andrea. The two high five.

Sarah backs up to the porch and sits down. Lilly is standing there with a plastic bag filled with beads.

LILLY
Having fun?

SARAH
Loads...

LILLY
So when do you leave to go to Dad's?

SARAH
9pm, I am catching the greyhound.

LILLY
Dad offered to pay for a plane ticket.

SARAH
I like the bus, I put on my walkman and listen to music and just watch the country go by.

LILLY
I can't believe you're doing this.

SARAH
Why?

LILLY
You will never be a real woman.

SARAH
What makes a woman?

LILLY
Reproductive organs.

SARAH
What about women without those? Women who can't have kids, are they not women?

LILLY
I don't want the same fight, can we just...

SARAH
You keep pushing that button.

LILLY
I just can't understand why a person would mutilate there body that way.

SARAH
What would you do if you were born in the wrong body? If every part of you felt like you were not who you should be. How you feel you should be, you need to think about that for a while.

Sarah walks away from Lilly, taking out her cigarettes and lighting one up.

EXT. MOM'S HOUSE- DUSK

As everyone is leaving the sun is going down and Andrea is collecting beads from the ditch.

Sarah walks up to her with a plastic bag.

The two smile as Andrea puts the beads in the bag.

ANDREA
Thanks Cuz.

SARAH
No problem. I am gonna walk home and pack, gotta catch the 9pm bus.

ANDREA
Awesome, Love you girl.

SARAH
Love you too.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sarah is laying on her bed with a lit cigarette between her lips. She inhales and exhales looking into space.

We see an alarm clock on the shelf next to her bed it says 8:23

SARAH
Might as well get going.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - NIGHT

Sarah walks into the small lobby which is packed with people. In her arms is a duffle bag and a black backpack on her shoulder.

She gets in line.

Eventually the line moves and she makes it to the counter.

The ticket agent is a skinny goth boy with shoulder length black hair in her face.

TICKET AGENT
Can I help you?

SARAH
I got a ticket for the 9pm to Trinidad.

TICKET AGENT
How many bags?

SARAH
Just this duffle bag.

TICKET AGENT
Awesome.

Sarah gets her bag weighed and gets a label. She then sits down in the lobby.

She sighs looking at her watch.

Standing up and walking toward the door.

EXT. GREYHOUND STATION- NIGHT

Sarah is smoking next to the back door as busses roll up.

She looks up and smiles as we hear a deep voice boom from the speakers.

TICKET AGENT (OS)
9pm West Bound us now arriving in gate 7. All passengers please line up behind the back door and your driver will take your ticket.

Sarah stomps out her cigarette and gets in line.

The Driver still smoking his cigarette starts taking tickets.

INT. BUS- NIGHT

The yellowish over head light shines on Sarah as she makes her way to an empty seat.

She sits down in a window seat and puts her headphones on.

We hear late 90s Nu Metal blasting as the we look at Sarah close her eyes.

EXT. GREYHOUND STATION- NIGHT

We see the busses depart. While the metal plays.

EXT. HIGHWAY- DAWN

The sky is a dark purple, that slowly changes to white as the sun rises.

We see the Bus roll by.

INT. BUS- DAWN

Sarah's head is pressed against the window. Her headphones slipping down, she is asleep.

The driver gets on the PA system.

DRIVER (VO)
We are pulling into Dallas in about ten minuets. Anyone going on to Denver or Trinidad, you will need to change busses here.

Sarah opens her eyes and groans, pushing herself up. She looks around the bus is empty.

SARAH
What happened to everyone?

DRIVER (VO)
Everyone got off in Houston, you moving on to Trinidad right?

SARAH
Yeah..

DRIVER (VO)
You change busses here. Got two hours to kill. So smoke em if you got em.

EXT. GREYHOUND STATION- DAY

The bus rolls up. As it comes to a stop we hear a loud "HISS" as the bus parks.

The door opens, Sarah steps out, the Driver steps out with her and opens the undercarriage and hands her her bag.

She nods and he nods.

She makes her way to the smoking area and takes out her pack.

We look close and see that she had 4 left. She sighs and looks around. There is a gas station across the street.

INT. GAS STATION- DAWN

It's a small store, feels crammed like a tuna fish can. She pushes through and grabs a 20oz soda and heads to the counter.

SARAH
I also need a pack of apple cigs.

EXT. GREYHOUND STATION- DAY

Sarah takes a swig from her soda and then a drag from her cigarette.

to her left is a payphone. She takes one last drag and stomps her cig out and walks over to the payphone.

She puts in some change and dials a number.

We hear the phone ringing and a deep voice on the other end.

VOICE
Jeff?

SARAH
Sarah.. Dad?

VOICE
Yeah.. So where are you?

SARAH
Dallas, two hour layover.

VOICE
When do you think you'll get here?

SARAH
They said the bus should get there around 10pm.

VOICE
Slow boat to China.

SARAH
I know, but I have more fun seeing the country this way.

VOICE
You always did love riding the roads.

SARAH
Yep, we grew up with you taking us all over. I missed it.

VOICE
So why do you wanna cut your dick off and be a sissy?

SARAH
I'm not a sissy, I was born in the wrong body and I am fixing it. Been on estrogen pills for two years. Been living in the coonass riddled swamp as a trans girl and dealt with that bull shit. Was hoping you would understand.

VOICE
I understand Sarah.

SARAH
Thanks Dad. I can't wait to see you.

VOICE
Same here.

SARAH
I'm gonna smoke a ciggy now Dad.

VOICE
You smoke?

SARAH
Yep.

VOICE
What's your brand?

SARAH
Apples.

VOICE
Classy.

SARAH
Yep, only badasses smoke apples.

VOICE
You got that right kid.

SARAH
I'll see you in a few hours Dad.

VOICE
Love you.

SARAH
Love you too.

Sarah hands up and takes out her pack.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - DAY

Sarah is laying on one of the hardwood benches in the lobby, she looks at her watch. It says 11:03am, she sighs

SARAH
Fucking bus is late.

TICKET AGENT (OS)
Attention greyhound passengers, the 11am bus to Trinidad is fifteen minuets behind, we will keep you posted on it's arrival.

SARAH
Fuck..

She looks over at a claw machine and sees a pile of stuffed animals inside. She shrugs and heads over to it.

She pops in a quarter, the machine comes to life, she manages to win a stuffed turtle. She clutches it to her chest and sits on the bench.

SARAH
I will call you Penny.

TICKET AGENT (OS)
Attention greyhound passengers, the 11am bus to Trinidad is pulling in now. Have your tickets ready.

Sarah grabs her bags, Penny under her arm. She stands in line with a handfull of travelers.

INT. BUS- DUSK

Sarah clutches Penny to her chest, her headphones on, we can hear muffled music. She is asleep.

The sun slowly sets outside the bus, it slowly gets dark.

Sarah opens her eyes, a short skinny guy named Norm (early 20s) sits next to her.

NORM
Hey pretty lady.

SARAH
Hi..

NORM
Where are you heading?

SARAH
Trinidad, seeing my father.

NORM
Nice, how long has it been?

SARAH
He left on my 12th birthday, this is my first time seeing him since then.

NORM
It's nice to hear you are going to reunite. My old man left when I was a kid too, he died alone in a motel room from meth.

SARAH
Sorry to hear that.

NORM
It's okay, did he pay for your ticket?

SARAH
No, I did, he wanted to pay for a plane, but I hate those. Rather take the dog.

NORM
No body likes the dog! It's a last resort.

SARAH
I meet cool people and get to see the country.

NORM
Is that a cajun accent?

SARAH
(smirks) yeah, I am from Duson.

NORM
Nice, I love going there for Mardi gras.

SARAH
Me too, saw the parade from my Mom's house before I left.

NORM
Fun..

SARAH
I'm Sarah.

NORM
Norm.

SARAH
Nice to meet you.

NORM
Right back at ya girl. You into that goth thing?

SARAH
I guess, just always loved Halloween and horror movies.

NORM
What's with the stuffed turtle?

SARAH
Won it in a claw machine at my last layover, kinda like having it.

NORM
Like having something to hold.

SARAH
Yeah...

NORM
I understand, it gets lonely on the road.

Norm puts his hand on Sarah's knee, she looks at him and smacks his hand.

NORM
What?

SARAH
I don't want that kind of companionship.

NORM
Whatever bitch.

Norm walks away. Sarah sighs and puts her headphones back on.

EXT. GREYHOUND STATION- NIGHT

It's the Trinidad bus station, Sid, Sarah's dad (early 50s) stands by the doors watching as the bus rolls up.

Sarah steps out, she sees her Dad and smiles, He smiles then she runs up and hugs him.

SID
Hey kiddo.

SARAH
Hey Dad.

They break the hug and Sid looks her over.

SID
You changed.

SARAH
Not that chubby little boy dressed as Rambo with the BB gun.

SID
You are an attractive young lady, except for the nose ring.

SARAH
Thanks Dad.

They make there way to his car.

INT. SID'S CAR- NIGHT

They sit in the car, and both light up a cig.

SARAH
So glad to be here, it was a long trip.

SID
Thought you liked ridding the bus.

SARAH
I love it, but am glad to be able to get into a real bed and get some sleep.

SID
I set you up in my backroom, got a nice bed and you can get a shower and a shave.

SARAH
Thanks Dad. Happy to be here.

INT. SID'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

It's a small apartment, decorated with nothing but blank walls. A couch and TV in the living room.

SID
I am sleeping on the couch, you can have my bed.

SARAH
I have some meds to take that will clean me out the night before the surgery. Can't eat anything tomorrow, see the doctor at 9am.

SID
Then let's get to bed. Good night hun.

SARAH
Good night Dad.

Sarah goes to the bedroom and falls into the bed and smiles. She rolls around on the covers like a worm.

She slips off her hoodie and jeans and gets under the covers. She closes her eyes and goes to sleep.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - MORNING

It's a very nicely decorated doctors office Lobby, Sarah and Sid enter, there are a few people in the lobby reading magazines. One of them is Holly (early 20s) trans girl, who looks like a lifeguard on baywatch, she looks at up Sarah and smirks.

HOLLY
Here for the opetation?

SARAH
Yeah, been waiting my whole teen life for this.

HOLLY
Teen life?

SARAH
Yeah, I knew when I was 12 but couldn't do anything until two years ago.

HOLLY
You are going to feel so much better once your done.

SARAH
Thanks.

Sarah smiles, as the line moves, she makes her way to the counter.

NURSE
Can I help you?

SARAH
Sarah Bundy here for my meeting with Dr. Fawler.

NURSE
Have you filled out your form?

Sarah hands a clipboard to the Nurse, she nods looking it over.

NURSE
Have a seat, we will call you in a few minuets.

Sarah sits down, taking out her CD player, she puts her headphones on and starts listening to music with her eyes on the floor.

The door opens, Nurse named Brandy steps out.

BRANDY
Sarah Bundy?

SARAH
Stands up, takes her headphones off and heads over.

INT. HALLWAY- DAY

Brandy walks Sarah down the hall.

BRANDY
Is this your first time?

SARAH
I.... yeah I wanted to do this when I was younger, but they wanted me to wait till I was 18 to do it.

BRANDY
That's good, we will put you in room 114, the doctor will see you soon.

INT. ROOM 114- DAY

It's a tiny exam room, Sarah is sitting on the exam bed swinging her feet off the edge. She feels alone, looking around at the bare walls.

After a few moments of silence Dr. Fawler walks in, a nice old man with silver hair.

DR.FAWLER
Miss Bundy?

SARAH
Yep.

DR.FAWLER
I'm Dr. Fawler, I will be doing your operation tomorrow morning. Just wanted to go over a few things. Dr. Wang back in Lafayette gave you meds to take to clear your system out. Do you have them?

SARAH
Yeah, I have them at my Dad's place.

DR.FAWLER
So take those today around 1pm, and no food after that, you will be cleaned out. It's not going to be pleasant.

SARAH
Nothing worth while is.

DR.FAWLER
Very true. And you shaved all of the body hair?

SARAH
Waxed it.

DR.FAWLER
Sounds good, your recovery time will be long, but we will get more into that later. For now go home and get some rest. Be ready at 9am tomorrow.

SARAH
So that's it?

DR.FAWLER
Anything else?

SARAH
(Starts to cry) You have no idea how much this means to me.

DR.FAWLER
I understand.

SARAH
When I was younger I collected comic books, my first job was at a comic book store. I sold all of my collection got around 113,000 dollars for all those golden age comics. It paid for this operation.

DR.FAWLER
Worth it?

SARAH
Worth it..

Dr. Fawler hugs Sarah and leaves.

INT. SID'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

We are outside the bathroom door, Sid is standing by smoking. We hear groans from inside.

SID
You doing okay hun?

Silence.

After a few moments we hear a toilet flush, then water running. The door opens, Sarah looks pale and sweaty.

SARAH
I don't have anything left inside me.

SID
Are you gonna get some rest?

SARAH
Yeah, we have to be at the hospital by 7am to prep for surgery.

SID
Go to bed.

Sarah nods, panting she stumbles to bedroom and falls into bed.

EXT. SID'S APARTMENT BUILDING- NIGHT

we see the sky quickly change from dark to sunrise, then thunder claps as it starts to rain.

Sarah steps out pulling her hood over her head, and motioning for Sid to follow.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAWN

Sarah and Sid enter, and are greeted by Brandy who is leaning over a wheel chair, she motions for Sarah to get in.

She sits in the chair and is moved to an exam room.

INT. OPERATION ROOM - DAY

Sarah is laying on a bed, hooked to IVs and wires. Brandy is about to put a mask on her face to give her the gas.

BRANDY
Any last words before we begin?

SARAH
This is a special day for me, a new me as a woman, as who I am supposed to be. Not playing dress up anymore. I will be my true self.

Everyone nods. Brandy puts the mask on Sarah.

INT. RECOVERY ROOM - DAY

Sarah is laying in a bed, Sid is at her bedside flipping through a magazine.

Sarah groans and opens her eyes.

SARAH
Anyone get the license number for that truck that hit me?

Sid laughs and gets to her.

SID
How do you feel baby girl?

SARAH
Like I lost weight.

They both laugh.

Brandy steps in.

BRANDY
Is someone feeling better?

SARAH
I feel like my guts have been rearranged.

BRANDY
You will have about six weeks of recovery, then you will be able to lead a normal life.

SARAH
Normal... I never thought that that word would come from anyone talking about me.

SID
You are beautiful.

Sarah lays back, smiling. Her eyes upward.

SIX MONTHS LATER

EXT. GREYHOUND STATION- DAY

It's the Lafayette station, Lilly and Molly are standing by the gate.

The bus rolls up, Lilly leans over looking at the door as it opens. People start to walk out.

Sarah takes a step off the bus, she smiles looking at Lilly and Molly.

Lilly runs up and hugs Sarah, the two hold each other for a few moments.

Sid steps off the bus behind Sarah, he looks over at Molly who smiles.

MOLLY
Hey Sid, long time.

SID
I always hated this coonass state, but I want to make a happy home for my daughters.

MOLLY
(tearing up) I would love that.

Molly and Sid hug.

LILLY
So what are you going to do now?

SARAH
Be free.

END CREDITS ROLL